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Recovering from the Loss of a Loved One: A Group Protocol for Remaining Active in Valued Occupations while Coping with the Loss of a Loved One

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Recovering from the Loss of a Loved One: A Group Protocol for Remaining Active in Valued
Occupations while Coping with the Loss of a Loved One

By

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In partial fulfillment of the requirements

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APPROVAL

This Scholarly Project Paper, submitted by Hailey Axtell, MOTS and Ty Berg, MOTS in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the Degree of Master of Occupational Therapy from the University of North Dakota, has been read by the Faculty Advisor under whom the work has been done and is hereby approved.

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Date

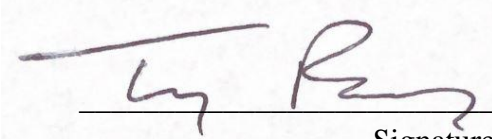
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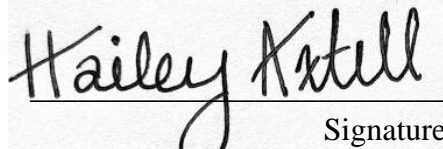
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ABSTRACT

Title: Recovering from the Loss of a Loved One: A Group Protocol for Remaining Active in Valued Occupations while Coping with the Loss of a Loved One

Background: As of 2018, approximately 40 million Americans are 65 years of age or older. Of this group of individuals, 40% of the women and 13% of the men are widowed (Bui et al., 2018). Between 2020 and 2060 the number of older adults is projected to increase upwards of 94.7 million (Mather et al., 2019). If the percentages are to stay the same, we will see a significant increase in older adults becoming widowed. Aside from the individuals becoming widowed, other older adults will lose their partners that they may not be married to becoming single as well. Following the loss of a partner, the survivor may experience an intense period of grief known as bereavement and consequentially have a loss in engagement of desired activities of daily living (ADLs) and instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs) (Dahdah & Joaquim, 2018). The Canadian Model of Occupational Performance and Engagement (CMOP-E) was chosen to guide the program as this model incorporates spirituality which is pivotal during bereavement following the loss of a partner.

Purpose: The purpose of this scholarly project is to develop a manualized intervention program utilizing the CMOP-E to better understand grief and coping while promoting occupational engagement for older adults who have recently lost a partner. A group protocol was created to address spirituality, the survivor, participation in desired occupations, and the environment to help with the process of grieving and promote occupational performance.

Methods: An extensive literature review was performed to better understand the impact losing a partner has on engagement and occupational performance, the impact of grief, and the bereavement process. From the information collected, a 10-week group program for addressing grief and bereavement while increasing occupational performance was developed.

Conclusion: The program titled, *Recovering from the Loss of a Loved One* was designed to be implemented by occupational therapists or future occupational therapy students.

CHAPTER I:

INTRODUCTION

In 2018 there were approximately 40 million adults 65 years of age or older in the United States, with 40% of the women and 13% of men being widowed (Bui et al., 2018). The life expectancy of older adults is an increasing trend and will lead to a growth in the number of widowed older adults. It is estimated that between 2020 and 2060, the number of older adults is projected to increase by 69%, from 56.0 million to 94.7 million (Mather et al., 2019). If the percentages of older adults were to stay the same over this duration, the United States will see a significant increase in the number of older adults losing their partner and becoming a survivor of a loved one. The need for a program that enhances the well-being of a survivor is a growing need directly linked to the increase in the number of older adults that are becoming a survivor. Older adults that have lost their partner are a specific population who may experience occupational deprivation during bereavement. Specifically, they may not be able to meet the new demands of their life while they are coping with the loss of their partner.

After the loss of a partner, the survivor of the partner will experience bereavement, which is the objective situation one faces after having lost an important person due to death. Bereavement is characterized by a state of grief and suffering (Dahdah & Joaquim, 2018). Symptoms of this can be distressing and impairing grief, traumatic stress, anxiety, and depression. Grief is the term that explains the emotional reactions that occur after a significant loss and relates to the internal processes in the person (Dahdah & Joaquim, 2018). Additionally, bereavement has been associated with physical problems such as limitations in daily activities and general health (Bui et al., 2018). These factors indicate that older adults experience

challenges with mental and physical well-being and compound the impact when aging, poorer physical health, and social isolation are seen in older adults during bereavement.

Bereavement is the process that calls for the reconstruction of meaning for the survivor (Dahdah & Joaquim, 2018). Meaning to a survivor can take various forms, such as roles or activities that provide fulfillment in life and adaption to becoming single (Collins, 2014). There is often a feeling of a loss of self-identified roles and occupations with bereavement and changes how meaning is perceived. Meaning is also a motivating factor to growth in one's life, especially following the loss of a partner. Therefore, it is important to identify and/or reconstruct meaning for the survivor to facilitate successful recovery during the stages of grief and bereavement.

There is current literature and research regarding the negative emotions and limitations to occupational performance a survivor faces during bereavement (Bui, et al., 2018); however, there is a gap in the literature regarding programs that can be used to positively facilitate return to participation in everyday activities during the bereavement process. A program that works to increase the survivor's ability to participate in new and old occupations is necessary. This program will directly lead to an increase in performance of roles and occupations while building upon the meaning of their new self-identity and occupational performance.

The Canadian Model of Occupational Performance and Engagement (CMOP-E) was utilized to guide the development, implementation, and outcomes of the product. The CMOP-E is comprised of three specific areas of focus, these being: person, occupation, and environment. The person consists of physical, cognitive, affective and spiritual aspects. Occupations include self-care, productivity, and leisure. Lastly, the environment consists of physical, institutional, cultural, and social (Turpin & Iwama, 2011). Spirituality is the core concept of the model and of the program and is pivotal to the bereavement process. Spirituality can be utilized for the facets

of meaning, roles, and occupational performance. The person is also addressed with the changes in physical and mental well-being and coping skills. Occupations are greatly impacted following the loss of a partner, this program will work toward increasing engagement in the occupations of self-care, productivity, and leisure; all of which are primarily impacted during the bereavement process. Lastly, the program will work with the survivor in maximizing performance in the different environments that the survivor may face challenges in. These commonly are the physical, social, and cultural environment. The proposed scholarly project will utilize all of these components to treat the survivor and maximize independence while coping with the loss.

Following the introduction, chapter two explores current evidence-based literature regarding bereavement, grief, and the effects that these have on the surviving older adult.

Chapter three consists of the methodology related to the development of the scholarly project and literature review. Chapter four will discuss in detail the product and the purpose of the product. Lastly, chapter five will provide a summary of the scholarly project and identify key findings.

CHAPTER II:

Literature Review

When a loved one passes away there are many changes that their surviving partner faces. Fry (2001) described that after experiencing the loss of a loved one, the survivor may feel a disruption in their life. The survivor experiences changes in their role as partner, social relationships, and lack participation in physical activity, which all lead to a decrease in self-esteem and self-worth. When this occurs, healing must begin for the survivor to regain confidence. There is no set amount of time that one may heal from the loss of their partner to regain previously meaningful roles and occupations. This healing journey will look different for each person and often is not linear. Dahdah and Joaquim (2018), argued that “when there is an interruption in a person’s occupation with the deceased, changes in lifestyle arise, causing abandonment of roles or an inability to perform activities with and for the loved one who died” (p. 16). Within the abandonment of roles and performance of activities, occupational performance is impacted following the loss of a loved one due to a decrease in motivation to participate in meaningful occupations. There are many support systems that can be beneficial to help with the grieving process and to increase engagement in lost occupations. There is a growing connection between occupation, satisfaction with life and continued participation in daily and desired occupations after the loss of a partner. Thus, participation in valued occupations can help promote successful aging following the loss of a partner (McIntyre & Howie, 2002).

During the bereavement process, changes in role identity are also seen especially when paired with occupations. Ward, Mathias, and Hitchings (2007) stated, “bereavement is a multidimensional process that has an impact on a person’s psychological, physiological, social,

economic, and spiritual well-being and is a risk factor for both depression and anxiety in older adults” (p. 362). Eckholdt, Watson, and O’Connor (2017) evaluated how bereavement affects roles of the survivor. The authors found that following the loss of their partner, survivors had difficulty with assuming roles that the spouse had previously completed and re-engaging in roles that the survivor previously held.

When someone experiences loss of a loved one, there are changes that are forced to be made that can impact a persons’ livelihood. Becoming widowed is associated with a 48% risk of mortality within the first 6 months after the loss of a partner (Sullivan & Fenelon, 2014, p. 57). During this time there is an experience of various emotions such as grief, anger, sadness, depression, and many others. With the emotions of losing a loved one, there is often a feeling of a loss of self-identity in roles and occupations and the meanings behind those. Dahdah and Joaquim (2018), described that “meaning also comes from the experiences of everyday situations in which a person constructs meaning through a dynamic process of constructing and reconstructing their understandings and explanations of everyday life” (p. 12). During this process of reconstructing self and meaning, the stages of grief play a factor in how the survivor performs occupations and comes to terms with the new reality of their lives.

Stages of Grief

The grief process is common among survivors and impacts one’s ability to perform activities of daily living (IADLs). The stages of grief identified by Reitschuler-Cross and Arnold (2020) include denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. In the denial stage, the survivor may have difficulty accepting that the loss or change is happening. During the denial stage, the survivor gives themselves time to gradually absorb the news and process this experience. Following the denial stage of grief is the anger stage, during this stage, the survivor

may hide the emotions they are feeling with anger. Anger is often directed at others and objects around the individual and can be a factor in the social isolation experienced as they can push others away during this time (Damianakis & Marziali, 2012). In the bargaining stage the survivor begins to feel feelings of vulnerability and hopelessness. The survivor begins to investigate ways that they may regain control of their life or the event. For survivors, bargaining is a way for the person to postpone the sadness, confusion or hurt that they are experiencing. Next, depression is a stage in which the survivor may begin to feel that they are running from their emotions or that they are trying to stay ahead of the emotions of bereavement. At this stage, some individuals may be able to embrace the situation and begin to work through the situation in a healthy manner while others may isolate and have self-destructive behaviors. With these two avenues during this stage, the survivor is either experiencing gains or losses in occupations and is commonly associated with the physical and mental health of the person (Eckholdt, Watson, & O'Connor, 2017). Lastly, acceptance is the stage of grief where the survivor has accepted the terms of what has happened. At this stage, the survivor has begun to move past the grief that they are feeling, and occupations are being restored or constructed.

Person Factors and Grief

Following the loss of a partner, healing comes when the survivor can regain meaning and sense of purpose in their new life without their partner (Crowther, Schmid, & Allen, 2003). Spirituality is often central to the process of bereavement after the loss of a loved one and is a concept that the survivor can use to regain their personal identity and meaning. Michael, Crowther, Schmid, and Allen (2003), argued that spirituality is a personal mission for understanding the ultimate answers to questions regarding life, meaning, and relationships. When a survivor searches for these meanings and answers, one can develop spiritual rituals and the

formation of a community of individuals looking for the same answers to life. With this, spirituality can mean different things to different people; however, overall spirituality refers to a personal search for answers regarding life, meaning, and relationships. Religion and spirituality can co-exist, for example, religious practices encourage spiritual growth and cannot be dismissed when one is searching for the meaning and purpose.

Damianakis and Marziali (2012) stated that constructs of spirituality are considered challenging to define as the conceptual complexity to spirituality and religion vary person to person. Incorporating spirituality as a component of bereavement integrates well with theoretical frameworks that associate grieving with finding new meanings in life roles and enhancing overall functioning in these roles that may have been impacted. Spirituality can positively influence the bereavement process, and in turn generates greater acceptance of the death of the partner. Also, involvement in spiritual rituals and activities can enhance coping skills and lead to increased interpersonal support in the forms of support and church groups. Spirituality can mean different things to many different people throughout the lifespan.

Bereavement of a partner in older age is a major life stressor associated with an increase in both physical and cognitive deficits. The impact of bereavement has profound effects especially on cognitive and physical health. For example, depression and cardiovascular health are the leading negative effects on the physical and cognitive health of the survivor (Eckholdt, Watson, & O'Connor, 2017). It is important to acknowledge these associated health conditions of the survivor and the impact these conditions have on their roles as they proceed with their life without their partner. Bui et al. (2018) examined the impact losing a partner has on the physical and mental well-being of the survivor. They found that 11.3% of study participants met the clinical threshold for complicated grief. This is a form of persistent and impairing grief that is

seen following the loss of a partner (Bui et al., 2018). The individual experiencing complicated grief will show decreased performance in both physical and cognitive demands regarding everyday functional tasks such as basic ADLs and instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs) performance. When comparing partner loss to other forms of grief, the survivor was over two times more at risk for complicated grief. The researchers also found that the death of a partner led to a greater than five times increase in likelihood for presenting with severe depressive symptoms. The results of this study highlight the profound emotional and physical impact on the survivor's mental health. Eckholdt, Watson, and O'Connor (2017) examined the effects of prolonged grief after the loss of a partner and the effects on roles and personal health. The major disorders that are associated with the loss of a partner include depression, posttraumatic stress disorder, and prolonged grief disorder. These disorders negatively impact the mental health of the survivor and lead to increased difficulties with the cognitive demands of roles survivors identified the need to perform. An impairment in cognition makes the performance of ADLs and IADLs challenging for the survivor to complete and successfully participate in.

Bui et al. (2018), also discussed the physical distress that survivors face following the loss of their partner. The researchers identified physical morbidity and mortality of the survivors. Within the first 30 days of a partner loss, older adults were found to be exposed to a two times greater increase in myocardial infarction or stroke. With this, there is an increase in health care services and institutionalization for the survivor. Sullivan and Fenelon (2014) found that the mortality risk in the first six months following the loss of a partner increased 48%. In the increase of mortality for the survivor, both violent and nonviolent deaths were seen from the survivors, suggesting the inability to cope with the stress of the loss (Bui et al., 2018). Violent deaths were found to be suicidal in nature while nonviolent deaths were passive, with changes in

physical and cognitive abilities leading to the death. Dahdah and Joaquim (2018) found that performance of new occupations and maintaining performance of prior occupations was shown to decrease the likelihood of death and maintain cognitive performance for the survivor.

Following the loss of a partner, the survivor also faces changes in dietary and other physical health behaviors when compared to individuals of whom are married with similar health profiles. (Lee, Cho, Grodstein, Kawachi, Hu, & Colditz, 2005). Lee et, al. (2005) found that survivors' body mass index (BMI) decreased following the loss of their partner, then is accompanied by a rise in BMI level as time progresses. The participants of the study indicated that this pattern of BMI changes was due to bereavement symptoms such as depression. The survivors in this study also showed a significant decrease in vegetables consumed for meals and an increase in unhealthy meals, such as fast food, microwave meals and other pre-made meals. Smoking cigarettes was identified as another negative health practice following the loss of a partner.-survivors were two times more likely to start, and or return to old smoking habits following the loss of their partner. This study showed the negative effects of bereavement on the physical health of the survivor (Lee et, al., 2005). The lack of opportunities for the widowed to engage in a healthy lifestyle following the loss of a spouse is a need that should be addressed in this population. This need is further supported by Bui et al. (2018) who argued that evidence is lacking for interventions available that target both the cognitive and physical needs of older adult survivors.

Occupational Performance and Grief

As individuals age and change so do their occupations over their lifespan. Older adults may become dependent on their partner for performance in everyday activities and reliant on assistance to participate in common ADLs. Having this reliance and dependence on the partner

to perform their IADLs could hinder a person's ability to complete these activities for themselves in the future. Following the death of a partner, the survivor's daily occupations are greatly impacted, especially during the early stages of bereavement. The changes faced during recent bereavement shape and anchor daily life for the survivor. Batista, Rebelo, Carvalho, Almeida, and Lancman (2019) evaluated the experience women had in relation to everyday occupations following the loss of a spouse. Participants of the study reported intense feelings of low motivation and disorientation to their environment following the death of the partner. The survivors in this study reported experiencing difficulties caring for themselves and performing basic self-care such as dying their hair and bathing. The participants also stated they had difficulties performing everyday tasks such as household organization and repairs, grocery shopping, and cleaning that the partner had performed before their death. Changes in these occupations affects the ability of the survivor to be independent while coping with the loss of their partner.

Leisure participation is another area of occupation that was impacted by the loss of a partner. Batista et al. (2019) identified that the female survivors expressed that they have had difficulties engaging in leisure activities and opportunities following the loss of their partner. The survivors indicated that they either missed participating in these activities with their spouse or had feelings of guilt for enjoying themselves despite just losing their partner. Controversially, two women from the same study noted that they had experienced satisfaction and happiness when performing new leisure occupations. These occupations were often ones that the spouse had previously partaken in. The women reported that participating in occupations that they previously performed with their partners provided a sense of continuation in the absence of their partner to assist in keeping the memory alive (Batista, et al., 2019). This contrast in experiences

of grief surrounding participating in occupations supports the argument that grief is unique to each person's experiences.

With difficulties in leisure activities for the survivor, engagement in social opportunities is affected in relation to those leisure activities. Newly widowed, older persons face a loss of social participation and have a higher rate of institutionalization compared to those who have not lost a partner (Donnelly & Hinterlong, 2009). Additionally, functional impairments that the partner had previously helped with made the survivors' use of public space more challenging. Donnelly and Hinterlong (2009) examined the changes in social participation and volunteer activity of survivors after losing a loved one. According to Donnelly and Hinterlong (2009), informal social participation consists of activities with family, friends, and neighbors. During the bereavement process the authors found that becoming widowed may diminish certain social relationships. This was seen to be most noticed in friendships that were primarily maintained by the partner that has passed. Formal social participation occurs through social and religious organizations. Generally, it is seen that older adults seek out opportunities to become involved in clubs and organizations following the death of their partner. This form of social participation leads to having higher self-esteem, life satisfaction, and fewer symptoms of depression. Lastly, Donnelly and Hinterlong (2009) examined formal volunteerism and the effect of bereavement on this social activity. Formal volunteerism consists of working for or through an organization in an unpaid capacity. For survivors, having the opportunity to be involved in experiences such as volunteerism has shown many positive effects on quality of life, self-perception, and formation of a social network for the survivors. Providing experiences that increase social activities and volunteerism will have a profound effect on the quality of life.

Environmental Factors and Grief

In addition to changes in social participation apparent following the loss of a partner, the survivor's cultural environment changes as well. In the cultural environment, Collins (2014) identified certain days of the year that were significant to individuals who had lost their partner such as birthdays, anniversaries, and holidays. Collins (2014) looked at the experience of Christmas for widowed women and found that the loss of their spouse challenged their rituals such as writing and sending Christmas cards and participating in Christmas celebrations. Additionally, some survivors noted that the loss of a spouse created family friction when the survivor's children became persistent that the mother stopped sending gifts due to financial concerns as recent bills had been amounting for the survivor. Collins (2014) also found that the lack of receiving Christmas cards was identified as a potential loss for the survivor, as they had stopped sending a Christmas card once they had lost their spouse. These challenges shaped the cultural environment and how these women interacted in them.

Naef, et. Al (2013) reported that following the death of a partner, survivors found themselves having to re-orientate themselves to the social environment. Some of the challenges identified by survivors included appearing in public alone and now identifying as a single person. Women in particular had trouble appearing in the social context and identifying as a widow; These women felt they had to pro-actively shape their lives to suit the environment and assume new roles to perform in this context. In addition, survivors experienced a sense of discontinuation of time, or a disruption between the past, present, and the future, and a new perception of the future as limited and filled with uncertainty. Functional impairments found by Naef, et al. (2013) played a significant factor in the survivor's ability to use public spaces following the loss of a partner. These limits to engagement in the social environment play a factor in the overall health and function in occupations. Challenges in occupational performance

can arise for the survivor without the prior assistance that they once received from their partner. These challenges are apparent to the decline in performance in the contexts that are previously identified and have a profound effect on the survivor.

Occupational Therapy Domain

As Batista, et al. (2019) identified, engagement in meaningful occupations allows the survivor of a deceased loved one to cope with and process the event. During this time, many individuals fall into periods of anxiety and depression, in which their self-care is negatively impacted. Through participation in skilled occupational therapy programs, participants of the program can receive help from occupational therapists in reducing feelings of anxiety, finding new satisfaction in life, and promoting the overall health and wellbeing of the individual.

Engagement in meaningful occupations is important for managing negative symptoms that accompany the loss of a partner. Christiansen, Backman, Little, and Nguyen (1999) stated that occupational therapy was founded on the belief that what people do influences their health and overall well-being. With this belief, the researchers performed a study to examine how personal projects effect perceived overall wellbeing. Personal projects are defined as a person's engagement in ongoing, goal-directed activities. The researchers found that occupational therapy played a significant role in well-being by impacting the person's ability to participate in daily occupations with occupational therapy support. Their data suggested that occupations with meaning to the performer contributed positively to perceived well-being. This information can be used for occupational therapists to provide meaningful goal directed interventions that address the roles that the survivor identifies as meaningful. In these meaningful roles, completion of tasks and occupations will lead directly to a positive increase in well-being.

Occupational therapists are trained and skilled in helping clients navigate and identify finding meaning in their occupation, re-engaging in previously meaningful occupations, explore new occupations and to promote well-being. Survivors can identify their own personal meaning through participation in valued occupations. “Meaning also comes from the experiences of everyday situations in which a person constructs meaning through a dynamic process of constructing and reconstructing their understandings and explanations of everyday life” (Dahdah & Joaquim, 2018, p. 12). Understanding that occupation can be influenced and changed during the bereavement process, a group program led by an occupational therapist can provide the support and interventions to directly improve the survivor’s overall health and well-being while being as independent as possible in daily activities.

Theoretical Framework

The Canadian Model of Occupational Performance and Engagement (CMOP-E) includes three main components. These components are person, environment, and occupation. The person component includes cognitive, physical, and psychological abilities, as well as spirituality. Within this model, spirituality is a main component of the bereavement process and is important for the grief process (Damianakis & Marziali, 2012). As the literature has shown, spirituality will guide the bereavement process. Next is the occupation component and this encompasses what the person engages in. This could include but is not limited to ADLs, work, leisure activities, and social participation. It is seen across the literature that these are the main occupations of focus following the loss of a loved one. The survivor experiences great challenges to participating and continuing in these occupations. The final component is the environment, and this can include the physical, social, and cultural spaces a person interacts in. The CMOP-E is client-centered and provides a holistic approach that focuses on the person's spirituality and strengths. Spirituality is

a component on the CMOP-E that is critical to the individuality of this model. Spirituality can mean different things to many different people and it grows within a person, molded by the environment, and shaped by desired occupations. Occupational performance is all of the components of the CMOP-E interacting with one another to perform and engage in daily activities. Occupational dysfunction is experienced when there is any interference or disruption with the person, occupation, or environment interaction (Turpin & Iwama, 2011). The Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM) is a tool that allows clients to score and rank occupations that are meaningful to them or occupations (occupational performance) that they struggle to complete (occupational dysfunction). This allows occupational therapists to individualize treatment plans and shape interventions to fit the client's needs, therefore, increasing the client's motivation and compliance with treatment (Townsend & Polatajko, 2007).

Incorporating the three main components of the CMOP-E will help guide group sessions, as well as individualize each session to fit the wants and needs of the participants. A key feature of the CMOP-E is that this model can be used with a diverse group of people and any health impairment (Turpin & Iwama, 2011, p. 119). The main components of the CMOP-E are all widely affected after loss of a partner. Person, environment, occupation, and spirituality have proved to be the core concepts of a being and can change in congruence with the survivor. Since the CMOP-E is highly client centered, the interaction between the three components will be different for each person (Turpin & Iwama, 2011, p. 121). This program will take into consideration the interaction of the three components and how the interaction is causing occupational disruption in the person's life. By mending the broken interaction between the three main components, the survivor will be able to achieve optimal occupational performance. Through participation in *Recovering from the Loss of a Loved One: A Group Protocol for*

Remaining Active in Valued Occupations while Coping with the Loss of a Loved One, survivors will be able to gain the confidence and skills to build the interaction of the components of the CMOP-E after the loss of a partner.

The literature review done by the authors has shown that older adults who lose their partner experience occupational dysfunction on some level. The current research provides support for the need of a program that enables the survivor to perform occupations and engage in new roles. The research also emphasizes how occupational therapy's domain is well suited to supporting occupational performance during the grieving process. Therefore, occupational therapy needs to be directly involved in the implementation or training of future leaders of the program as occupational therapy has the foundational knowledge for promoting engagement in ADLs and IADLs.

CHAPTER III:

Methodology

This scholarly project was designed to heighten the interests and knowledge base of not only occupational therapy practitioners but also with intent to follow specific scholarly guidelines. The initial step taken in the development of this project included an extensive review of existing literature regarding bereavement, grief, loss of a significant other, and the profession of occupational therapy in relation to healthcare services provided to an individual that has lost a partner. Several databases and search engines, including CINAHL Complete, PubMed, Embase, PsychInfo, and Google Scholar, were used for the literature review. Terms including “bereavement,” “older adults,” “grief,” “loss of a spouse,” “occupational therapy,” “widowhood,” “occupation,” and “spirituality” were implemented in the scholarly literature searches. These search terms were chosen and utilized to directly locate and retrieve relevant and current evidence related to the desired topic. The CMOP-E by Polatajko, Townsend, and Craik (2007) was used to guide the creation of the product. After completing the article search, summaries of key articles were then completed and included the purpose, study design, sample size and characteristics, procedures/interventions used, and results. This led the researchers to identify the need for the role of occupational therapy in creating a group protocol to improve the physical and emotional well-being for the survivor who has lost a loved one.

A literature review was then conducted to provide further understanding of the emotional impact of losing a loved one, physical impact of losing a loved one, impacts on occupational performance, psychosocial support needs, task support needs, and the role of OT and specific interventions for managing occupational independence during daily activities. In reviewing the literature, there was an identified growing need for psychosocial support needs, task support

needs, and support needs for the population of people who have lost a loved one. These topics will be individually addressed when developing the product, a group protocol, this is designed to be implemented in a weekly meeting format. The topics mentioned above will be the primary focus and discussion of each class session. Having, learning, and maintaining skills in all three of these areas are necessary for adults seeking to return to a prior level of function before the loss of their loved one. The role of OT is to enable successful engagement in everyday roles and occupations for adults who have lost a loved one. This includes addressing client factors and performance skills that have been inhibited due to the individual's experience of losing their loved one. The group protocol will facilitate successful reengagement in daily occupations for the survivor after the loss of a loved one.

To facilitate the development of the group protocol sessions, Cole's Seven Steps by Cole (2012) will be used to guide the group members through the class and increase their occupational performance. The primary purpose of this group method facilitation is to enable participation of members in a shared task or activity while also reflecting upon its meaning to everyone (Cole, 2012). Cole's Seven Steps are: 1) Introduction; 2) Activity; 3) Sharing; 4) Processing; 5) Generalizing; 6) Application; and 7) Summary. Various performance skills related to daily occupations (i.e., home maintenance) will be simulated in a group format and group members will be educated and encouraged to participate in new or rediscovered daily occupations.

Prior to the development of a group protocol, an occupation-based model was chosen to guide the construction of the product. The CMOP-E was chosen to organize the group protocol because it incorporates components of the person, environment, and occupation as well as aspects of spirituality (Polatajko, Townsend, & Craik, 2007). The person, environment, occupation, and spirituality all contribute to an individual's occupational performance.

Occupational performance is maximized when there is optimal “fit” between each component.

The authors of this product believe that using the CMOP-E model to guide the product will allow them to break down each component and apply appropriate daily occupations to optimize occupational performance for the adults who have lost a loved one.

The intended group protocol is to be implemented with adults who have lost a loved one and are experiencing the lack or loss of participation in daily occupations. Current research indicates that there is a need for occupational therapy interventions for adults after they have lost a loved one; however, there is a gap in the literature related to how to provide occupational support to these adults so they can receive the most occupational education and encouragement as possible. Training, education, and reintroduction to daily occupations to increase occupational performance and engagement following loss of a loved one should be emphasized to benefit the participants as much as they possibly can from the group protocol. The authors developed the group protocol by completing a thorough literature review, selecting an appropriate occupation-based model to apply to the product, and then creating the product. Chapter IV will present the product, *Recovering from the Loss of a Loved One: A Group Protocol for Remaining Active in Valued Occupations while Coping with the Loss of a Loved One*.

CHAPTER IV:

PRODUCT

The loss of a loved one can have significant impacts on the survivor's ability to cope, perform desired activities and roles, and return to their normal life. This is especially seen during bereavement which is a time of intense grief and suffering following the loss of a loved one (Dahdah & Joaquim, 2018). The changes and symptoms that commonly affect the survivor during bereavement range from emotional and cognitive well-being, physical well-being, and the context in which the survivor performs previous meaningful activities (Bui et. Al, 2018; Dahdah & Joaquim, 2018; Naef, et. Al, 2013). Furthermore, there is a growing need to support survivors and enhance their ability to cope and return to independently performing desired and necessary activities and roles. An effective way to address these issues is using a group protocol that supports finding a meaning in the survivor's life to assist in coping and developing the skills and roles to continue to be independent.

The use of specific occupations that impacted following the loss of a partner will be focused on for improving occupational performance of the group member. Participating in these occupations will improve the emotional and cognitive health, physical health, and performance of roles and activities in specific contexts. The group sessions will be structured to allow the members to learn coping skills while participating in meaningful occupations. The overall goal of this program is to improve the survivor's ability to cope with their loss and perform occupations and roles that are meaningful. Ultimately, upon the completion of this program the survivor will continue living an independent and meaningful life following the loss of their partner.

Purpose and Rationale

The overall purpose is to improve the occupational performance of the survivor following the loss of a partner. This will be achieved using a group protocol that allows the participants to explore coping strategies and meaningful occupations that allow them to regain or maintain their independence in desired roles and activities. The main areas that are addressed in the group protocol include coping skills, emotional and cognitive well-being, physical well-being, and roles.

Overarching Goals

1. By the end of the group protocol, each participant will be able to identify their stage of grief and a coping strategy to assist them with occupational performance with desired tasks and activities.
2. By the end of the group protocol, each participant will be able to identify their spirituality while participating in a spiritual event.
3. By the end of the group protocol, each participant will be able to identify one way their occupational performance has been enhanced with their physical, cognitive, or affective capacity.
4. By the end of the group protocol, each participant will be able to identify one way their occupational performance has been enhanced with their self-care, leisure, or productivity.
5. By the end of the group protocol, each participant will be able to identify one way their occupational performance has been enhanced with respects to their physical and/or social environment.

Frame of Reference and Rationale

The Canadian Model of Occupational Performance and Engagement (CMOP-E) will be used to guide the development of this group protocol. At the core of the CMOP-E is the person

consisting of the affective, cognitive, and physical with a primary focus on spirituality. Outside the person is occupation, with a focus on self-care, leisure, and productivity. Lastly, encompassing the two aspects of the model is the environment and the role that plays on occupational performance. The environment primarily consists of the physical, institutional, cultural, and social (Turpin & Iwama, 2011). This model drives this group protocol with a focus on occupational performance and engagement while utilizing the importance of spirituality following the loss of a loved one. All the above factors can cause occupational dysfunction and will be addressed through the protocol optimizing performance for continuation of successful engagement in occupations after the loss of a partner. Occupational therapists are most qualified to lead this program due to their extensive training and understanding of occupational performance and the psychosocial components of this. An occupational therapist will be able to find the balance of the different components that make up occupational performance while being mindful of the psychosocial needs and supports that one needs while grieving the loss of a partner.

Information for Occupational Therapists

The population for this group protocol is older adults who are seeking help with the recovery of losing a partner. The group protocol is titled *Recovering from the Loss of a Loved One: A Group Protocol for Remaining Active in Valued Occupations while Coping with the Loss of a Loved One*. Impairments commonly experienced by people following the loss of a loved one are intense grief and inabilities or difficulties participating in new and old occupations (Eckholdt, Watson, & O'Connor, 2017). Coping styles and ability to participate in occupations significantly impact a person's everyday life. Older adults suffering from the loss of a loved one may face difficulties coping with the recent change in their life and have high risk of institutionalization or

even death as compared to other older adults who have not lost their partner (Sullivan & Fenelon, 2014).

Group Member and Size

This group will be a closed group consisting of 6 to 10 participants without the option to join once the group has begun. The participants for this group may be male or female and must be 65 years of age or older and currently living without the assistance of a caretaker. Each member will have to have lost their partner within the last year to be eligible to participate in the program. The group members will need to be experiencing negative effects in coping with the loss, engagement or occupational performance directly related to ADLs and/or IADLs.

Role of the Occupational Therapist

The role of the occupational therapist in leading this group protocol is to:

- Lead and facilitate group protocols in accordance with Cole's Seven Steps (Cole, 2012).
- Apply the basic principles of the CMOP-E to each session.
- Encourage engagement in occupational performance to limit occupational dysfunction.
- Educate group members in occupational performance of ADLs, IADLs, and the psychosocial components following the loss of a partner.
- Utilize therapeutic reasoning skills to enhance the learning and engagement in group sessions.
- Utilizing clinical reasoning skills to better assist the survivor of the lost partner in their natural contexts.

Time and Location of Facilitation

The group sessions will be held at a community setting, such as a senior center. Sessions will take place one night a week for 10 weeks and be held twice a year. Each session will be

approximately 1 hour in length and be held during midday or evenings, depending on availability of the therapist. These sessions will resemble an outpatient rehabilitation setting as the group members are able to transport themselves to the group and transport themselves home after each session.

Assessment

The Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM) by Law et. al, (2014) will be used as it is intended as an initial and ending assessment to measure initial performance and ending performance of occupations. The COPM pairs well with this group protocol due to the use of the CMOP-E found work for increasing occupational performance in this group protocol. The COPM allows the group members to provide information on the perception of their ability to perform occupations and the importance to the different occupations.

Recruitment of Participants

Group members will be recruited by creating promotional flyers (appendix A) and posting them throughout the community of Casper, Wyoming. Common places may be different senior centers, hospitals, and funeral homes.

Recovering from the Loss of a Loved One: A Group Protocol for Remaining Active in Valued Occupations while Coping with the Loss of a Loved One

By: Hailey Axtell, MOTS & Ty Berg, MOTS

Advisor: Kelly Dornbier, EdD, OTR/L

Program Outline

Session 1: Introduction and Understanding Grief
CMOP-E: Preparatory Activity of Person (Affective)

Session 2: Coping and Relaxation Exercises
CMOP-E: Person (Affective)

Session 3: Spirituality Exploration
CMOP-E: Person (Spirituality)

Session 4: Cognitive and Physical Exercises
CMOP-E: Person (Physical/Cognitive)

Session 5: Shopping
CMOP-E: Occupation (Self-care/Productivity/Leisure)

Session 6: Cooking for One
CMOP-E: Occupation (Self-care/Productivity/Leisure)

Session 7: Home Management
CMOP-E: Occupation (Self-care/Productivity)

Session 8: Money Management: Budgeting
CMOP-E: Occupation (Self-care/Productivity)

Session 9: Leisure Exploration
CMOP-E: Occupation (Self-care/Productivity/Leisure)

Session 10: Wrap Up and Referrals
CMOP-E: Environment (Physical/Social/Cultural)

Session 1:

Introduction and Understanding Grief

Brief Outline

- Introduction (3 minutes)
- Warm Up (10 minutes)
- Activity (30 minutes)
- Discussion (12 minutes)
- Wrap Up/End session (5 minutes)

Room Arrangement

- 3 Tables arranged in a semicircle pattern facing a TV for equal exposure to the TV and to elicit group conversation.

Introduction

Welcome everybody to the first of ten sessions for *Recovering from the Loss of a Loved One*. In today's session we will begin with understanding grief and how you can begin to cope with the grief of losing our loved one. Stages of grief are not linear and are different for each one of us. Being able to identify the different stages of grief will strengthen our understanding of where you are on this path and make the coping process more manageable.

During this group, the expectations are:

- That everybody will be respectful to one another, participate to their best abilities, and ask questions as needed for clarification.
- Are there any questions before we begin today's session?

Objectives

1. By the end of this session, group members will be able to understand the different stages of grief and the benefits of sharing your story of bereavement.

2. By the end of this session, group members will be able to acknowledge and better understand different emotions that they feel during the activity and identify which stage of grief they are currently facing.

Warm Up

To begin, hand out a copy of the Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM), 5th ed by Law et al. (2014). This will be used to measure current performance of each member, and then will be readministered at the end to measure the progress of each member throughout the activity. The COPM is an outcome measure to capture the participant's self-perception of performance of everyday living, over time. Therapists should have a copy for themselves and go through it out loud with the group. Encourage group members to ask questions as they fill out if they desire clarification. Once this is completed, the leader will show the image from Appendix K. Using the picture and description for the leader in Appendix K, leader will describe how the program is structured and what to expect moving forward.

Activity

Materials Needed

- Laptop (Therapist should provide)
- HDMI cable (\$8)
- TV or projector screen (Should be at facility)
- 9 COPM manual and handouts (\$160)
- Estimated total: \$168

Play video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kxkKjR-1p1w>

- Begin with a group discussion about the TED talk:
 - What was your reaction to this video?

- What kind of emotions did the video produce within yourself? How has seeing other couples made yourself feel?
- How can you move forward while suffering from the loss of our loved one?
- What are the 5 stages of grief? (denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance)
- Group into teams and give each group one of the 5 stages of grief.
- Ask the group to come up with feelings that someone might face when in that stage of grief.
- After compiling a list, have the groups list what others (family/friends) might see when someone is currently experiencing that stage of grief.
- Group leaders should also discuss with group members that recovery from anything is not linear. With grief it is anticipated (and completely normal) that the person experiencing grief will likely move back and forth between stages of grief.

Objectives Accomplished

This activity will allow group members to better understand the stages of grief and bereavement (objective 1) while also sharing their story about what they have gone through and how their experience is currently impacting their lives. Objective 1 is achieved when the group identifies their feelings. During the sharing activity the group members may experience many different emotions (objective 2) and become overwhelmed. Objective 2 is achieved when members can identify which stage of grief, they are currently in.

Sharing

Tell the group that it is time to go around the room and share how they felt performing the activity and if they currently use any coping skills they think may be of value to the group.

Processing

- How do you feel after watching this video and engaging in this discussion?
- How did you feel when your feelings were similar/different to others during the activity?
- Do you feel that this session has helped you to be more conscious of your personal experience with bereavement and grief?
- If you do feel you have an increased knowledge and understanding of your grief experience, how does it feel?
- How did telling your story about the loss of your loved one to the group make you feel?
- Which of your daily activities do you feel have been impacted the most since the loss of your loved one?
- How are family and friends responding to your loss, what has been the most helpful and what has been difficult for you in their responses?

Generalizing

Therapists will make connections between the answers that were given by group members. For example, the therapist can respond, “Most of you stated that (you were in this stage of grief, finding this helpful, etc.)” or “Some common (barriers or enablers) most of you identified were...”

Application

Go around the group and ask the members how they will use what they have learned about stages of grief and bereavement that is important to their daily routines and occupations.

- Ask the group about what they have learned from listening to the shared experiences of others.

Summary

Have group leader summarize:

- What was completed for the warm up.
- How the activity went and some of the common themes of the activity.
- Shared feelings amongst group members during the activity.
- How members may apply the skills learned today and benefits of this through the next week.
- Thank the group for participating and sharing.
- End group on time

Homework

Please pick a book from the list provided (Appendix B), we recommend that you order or purchase and begin to read. We look forward to having members share what you have learned from your future readings during future sessions.

Session 2:

Coping and Relaxation Exercises

Brief Outline

- Introduction (3 minutes)
- Warm Up (10 minutes)
- Activity (30 minutes)
- Discussion (12 minutes)
- Wrap Up/End Session (5 minutes)

Room Arrangement

- Three tables set up in a semi-circle to promote active conversation amongst group members.

Introduction

Welcome everybody to today's group and inform them that today we will be focusing on coping skills and relaxation techniques. Coping skills are always important for us to use, especially after the loss of our partner. It is our hope that learning some new coping skills and relaxation strategies will help improve everyday function and allow you to begin performing everyday activities in a manner that resembles the past version of you or a new healthier version of you. Ultimately, we want you to have additional strategies to continue to move forward.

During this group the expectations are:

- That everybody will be respectful to one another, participate to their best abilities, and ask questions as needed for clarification.
- Group Leader should re-visit the content shared in last session and ask participants about their week between the sessions. Specifically ask them to share if/when they reflected upon the content in session one and how this was or was not helpful.
- Are there any questions before we begin today's session?

Objectives

1. By the end of this session, group members will become knowledgeable about possible coping skills and relaxation strategies to help them cope during their experience of grief.
2. By the end of this session, group members will be able to apply knowledge about different coping skills and relaxation strategies and be able to implement one during times of distress.

Warm Up

Before starting the activity, the leader will guide the group with a deep breathing exercise. The leader will instruct the group to close their eyes if participants want, and to imagine themselves somewhere or doing something that makes them happy or calm. The group will be instructed to breathe in through their nose for 5 second, hold for 2 seconds, and then release the air through their mouth for 5 seconds. The leader will repeat this for a total of 10 times. Have group members think about how they feel after performing the exercise. Explain to the group that the purpose of coping and relaxation exercise is to allow the body to relax physically and mentally.

Activity

Materials Needed

- 8 printouts of Finish the Sentence Handout (Appendix C) (\$2)
- 1 bag of Hershey's Kisses (\$10)
- 8 pencils/pens (previously purchased)
- Laptop (provided by therapist)
- HDMI cable (previously purchased)
- TV (should be at facility)

- Estimated total: (\$12)

Activity Description

Today you will learn about relaxation strategies that can be used to assist in our process of coping as well as in everyday life. Losing a partner is an extremely difficult and challenging time, full of stressful events. Learning relaxation strategies that allow our bodies and minds to better cope with the events and while promoting a healthier lifestyle. Deep breathing exercises, seated yoga, and progressive muscle relaxation are all forms of relaxation techniques. These exercises can be used to assist in mood stabilization, anxiety management, and everyday stressors along with the stressor of losing your partner.

Play Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QOhGBaiA4CU>

In the next activity the leader will state that coping is when you take life's problems and try to minimize them to calm anxiety, worry, and stress. Some types of coping skills could include support groups, journaling about experiences and emotions, talking with friends or family, art, finding ways to put the moment into perspective, and identifying ways to decompress as soon as the moment has passed. Next, pass out 3 slips of paper and 3 Hershey's Kisses to each member of the group. The leader will then instruct the members to write down 3 things that remind the member of their loved one or a happy memory they have with the loved one. They will next be instructed to roll up the piece of paper and tape it to the Hersey kiss. The leader will instruct the group to take the kisses home and open the kiss and read the paper whenever they feel sad, worried, stressed, or anxious about missing their loved one. The leader can then instruct the group to continue doing this at home if it works for them. The leader will then ask if anyone has questions before moving on to the next activity.

The leader will then instruct the group that they are going to participate in a form of journaling. The leader will pass out the “Finish the Sentence” worksheet. The leader will allow the group to start writing their finished sentences on the paper provided (Appendix C). Group leaders will ask each member to share two of the sentences that they finished and why they feel the way they do about those.

Objectives Accomplished

This activity will allow group members to participate in gaining knowledge about coping skills and relaxation techniques (objective 1). Objective 1 is achieved when the group identifies different types of coping skills and relaxation techniques. During the activities, the group members may try or implement different coping skills and relaxation techniques (objective 2) and integrate them into their daily routine. Objective 2 is achieved when members can identify and implement coping skills and relaxation techniques that will work best for their lifestyle.

Sharing

Tell the group that it is time to go around the room and share how they felt performing the different relaxation and coping techniques.

Processing

- What did you like about the activities today? Were they useful in calming ourselves?
- What emotions did the exercise illicit as you performed them?
- What did you find beneficial while performing these activities?
- How do you feel your feelings were similar or different from the others in the group?
- Did these activities help you feel connected to your loved one?

Generalizing

Therapists will make connections between the answers that were given by group members. For example, the therapist can respond, “Most of you stated that (certain activity was most enjoyable, this emotion was provoked, etc.)” or “Some common benefits most of you identified were...”

Application

Relaxation exercises and coping skills are beneficial for our overall health and can be a positive contributor to managing the stressors and anxiety that come with losing our partner. These are important for the coping process during the grief and bereavement stages.

- Can you think of when you can utilize a relaxation exercise or coping skills into your day? How do you perceive the benefits of this helping you?
- Make sure each person commits to when they will use it and how it can benefit them in their daily lives.

Summary

Have group leader summarize:

- What was completed for the warm up.
- How the activities went and some of the common themes of the activity.
- Shared feelings amongst group members during the activity.
- How members may apply the skills learned today and benefits of this through the next week.
- Thank the group for participating and sharing.
- End group on time.

Homework

Utilize one of the strategies learned during today's session at least once each day and be mindful of how using this strategy impacts your overall mood, motivation, and ability to get through your day. Continue to read through chosen book(s). For next week, ask members to bring in a printout of a picture of their past loved one.

Session 3:

Spirituality Exploration

Brief Outline

- Introduction (3 minutes)
- Warm-up (12 minutes)
- Activity (15-20 minutes)
- Discussion (10 minutes)
- Wrap-up/End Session (5 minutes)

Room Arrangement

- Tables to be arranged in a semi-circle fashion to promote equal participation from all members.

Introduction

Welcome everybody to today's session regarding spirituality. Today we will be focusing on the role spirituality can play in the coping process and participating in a meaningful activity. Group leaders will give a quick summary of the previous session.

During this group, the expectations are:

- Everybody will be respectful to one another, participate to their best abilities, and ask questions as needed for clarification.
- Are there any questions before we begin today's session?

Objectives

- By the end of the session, each member will be able to participate in a spiritual activity that allows them to express themselves or assist in the coping process.
- By the end of the session, each member will identify how they can use spirituality in their daily lives.

Warm Up

- Hand out “What is Spirituality?” handout (Appendix E) to each member, give the members approximately 5 minutes to read through the handout.
- Discussion questions:
 - Share a significant spiritual experience or transformative learning experience (i.e., organized religious event, volunteerism, social gathering, etc.).
 - How did this experience affect your life?

Activity

Materials needed:

- 8 white floating water lanterns (\$20)
- 1 paint brush set (\$11)
- 1 paint pack (\$38)
- 1 Sharpie marker set of various colors (\$13)
- Estimated Total: \$82

Activity Description

Leaders will prepare for activity by having all materials needed ready.

- Each member will be given one floating lantern.
- Ask members to write a message or reflection of a special moment that they wish they could say/share with their partner.
- Have members paint the lantern in a way that is meaningful to them and their partner (i.e., favorite flower, shared activity, passions, etc.)
- Place the picture of your partner at the base of your lantern.

Objectives Accomplished

This activity allows participants to reflect in a spiritual way to address things they wish they could say to their partner and ultimately in the coping process of dealing with grief utilizing a meaningful activity (objective 1). Through the handout and participating in the activity, each member will begin to understand how they can utilize spirituality going forward and the positive effects that it can have on their journey (objective 2).

Sharing

Each member will present their floating lantern and share the meaning behind what they painted or drew on it.

Processing

- What did you enjoy about the activity?
- Was it difficult to decide what to paint to express your views of your lost one? What was your reasoning painting what you did?
- What emotions or feelings were provoked while you were working on the lantern?
- You can express spirituality in many forms, this activity is one way. What is another way that you may be using spirituality to cope with the loss of your loved one?

Generalizing

Therapists will make connections between the answers that were given by group members. For example, the therapist can respond, “Most of you stated that (exploring your spirituality, finding meaning in activity, etc.) was the most enjoyable,” or “Some common feelings most of you identified were...”

Application

Spirituality allows us to find meaning, purpose, and connections within ourselves and the world around us. It is also a tool to utilize as you heal from the grief that you have experienced in

losing a partner. Spirituality is not just something you experience alone; you can experience it through others in forms of volunteerism and social gatherings. Or, you can experience this in learning within ourselves and providing for others and the environment.

Ask each member how they will use spirituality in their daily lives.

- How will you utilize spirituality in your everyday life? What benefits do you expect to get from doing so?
- Make sure each person commits to when they will use it and how it can benefit them in their daily lives.

Summary

Have group leader summarize:

- What was completed for the warm up.
- How the activity went and some of the common themes of the activity.
- Shared feelings amongst group members during the activity.
- How members may apply the skills learned today and benefits of this through the next week.
- Thank the group for participating and sharing.
- End group on time.

Homework

Place your lantern somewhere in your home where you may reflect on your loved one and cherished moments or memories. You may also get together with family and friends of your loved one and light the candle and let the lantern float down the river. These strategies allow us to cope with the loss of the loved one by daily reminders of them or setting ourselves free with some of the burden you feel after losing them.

Session 4:

Cognitive and Physical Exercises

Brief Outline

- Introduction (3 minutes)
- Warm-up (12 minutes)
- Activity (15-20 minutes)
- Discussion (10 minutes)
- Wrap-up/End Session (5 minutes)

Room Arrangement

- Tables to be arranged in a semi-circle fashion to promote equal participation from all members.

Introduction

Welcome everybody to today's session regarding physical and mental health. Today we will be participating in yoga and at home workouts along with creating poetry and affirmations to assist in the coping process and participating in a meaningful activity. Group leaders will give a quick summary of the previous session and ask if any of the members would like to share something that they have learned from their chosen book(s).

During this group, the expectations are:

- Everybody will be respectful to one another, participate to their best abilities, and ask questions as needed for clarification.
- Are there any questions before we begin today's session?

Objectives

1. By the end of this session, group members will be able to understand the importance of physical and mental health as well as self-care activities.

2. By the end of this session, group members will be able to apply knowledge about physical and mental health and be able to implement oneself care activity during times of distress.

Warm-Up

Hand out a blank piece of paper and a writing utensil to each group member. State that the group is going to make a self-care contract. Explain that this contract is going to be a reminder to themselves the importance of self-care and what they find meaningful. Have them write down the phrase “I promise myself that:”

1. When I am feeling sad, I will remember_____
2. Next time I’m feeling anxious I will_____
3. When I feel lost or stressed, I will stop and remind myself_____
4. I will strive my hardest to_____
5. If I find myself making excuses I will_____
6. I choose to treat myself, always with_____

After all the questions are complete have each member sign and date the bottom of the contract. Once this is completed, the group members will then write on another sheet of paper some positive things about themselves and things that they are currently thankful for. Leaders will have each member share one positive thing and one thing they are currently thankful for. The leaders will guide the group members through the progressive muscle relaxation used in the previous session.

Activity

Materials Needed:

- Blank computer paper (\$4)

- Pencils/Pens (\$8)
- Sticky notes (\$15)
- Estimated total cost: \$27

Activity Description

Leaders will prepare for activity by having all materials needed ready and will begin the activity reminding participants that physical health is more than working out.

- Physical health can improve your body functions and quality of life. Mental health includes your emotional, psychological, and social well-being. Mental health is important because it helps us handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices. Using coping strategies allows us to also increase our mental health and deal with the intense grief you face leading to better outcomes in performance and engagement in daily life. Health management is the opportunity to take care of your physical and mental health and to reduce stress. These activities are important to maintain a healthy relationship with yourself and to better balance your overall health.
- 10 minute yoga exercise:

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T41mYCmtWls>)(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tyeMFy9KkTY>). Remind participants that they can stay seated in their chair if they are not able to fully participate in a certain pose and a handout will be provided at the end of the session with different workouts and a list of links to use at home (Appendix F).
- Writing a haiku poem about something that makes them happy (Line one: 5 syllables, Line two: 7 syllables, Line three: 5 syllables). On the back of the paper have each person think of their favorite songs to add to a playlist.

- Daily affirmations video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XfEEbhcyEvE>). Have group members write 12 affirmations about themselves on sticky notes to hang on a mirror at home.
- Explain that there are many different types of self-care activities and each person can have their own self-care activity that they can enjoy. Affirmations are important because they can change your negative thought patterns into positive ones, help make you feel positive about yourself and boost your confidence, influence your mind to access new beliefs, motivate you to act, and concentrate on your goals.

Objectives Accomplished:

This activity will allow group members to participate in gaining knowledge about physical and mental health as well as health management exploration (objective 2). Objective 1 is achieved when the group identifies different types of self-care activities, they are interested in trying. During the activities, the group members will implement one health management activity (objective 2) and integrate them into their daily routine. Objective 2 is achieved when members can identify and implement a health management activity during a time of distress.

Sharing

Each member will share feelings that they experienced while participating in a few different health management activities.

Processing

- How do you feel after engaging in these activities?
- How did you feel when your feelings were similar/different to others during the activity?
- Are there other self-care activities that you enjoy?

- Think about others in your social circle who you could participate in one of your favorite health management activity with, share with the group.

Generalizing

Therapists will make connections between the answers that were given by group members. For example, the therapist can respond, “Most of you stated that (participating in physical activity, finding meaning in health management, etc.) was the most enjoyable,” or “Some common feelings most of you identified were...”

Application

Health management allows us to find meaning, purpose, and connections within ourselves and the world around us. It is also a tool to utilize as you heal from the grief that you have experienced in losing a partner. Health management is not just something you experience alone; you can experience it through others in forms of social gatherings or social groups. Or you can experience this in learning within ourselves and providing for others and the environment.

Ask each member how they will use spirituality in their daily lives.

- How will you utilize health management in your everyday life? Identify how utilizing health management strategies into your daily routine will be beneficial to your overall physical and mental health.
- Make sure each person commits to when they will use it and how it can benefit them in their daily lives.

Summary

Have a group leader summarize:

- What was completed for the warm up

- Completed an activity to address the importance of physical and mental health, as well as self-care exploration.
- Shared different feelings that were experienced during the activities
- Discussed how health management exploration can help with the grief process and healing
- Discussed how each member will apply the information learned within the
- next week
- Thank the group for participating and sharing
- End the group on time

HOMEWORK

Participate in one health management activity and journal about your experience.

Continue reading from chosen book or books.

Session 5:

Shopping

Brief Outline:

- Introduction (3 minutes)
- Warm-up (12 minutes)
- Activity (45 minutes)
- Discussion (10 minutes)
- Wrap-up/End Session (5 minutes)

Room Arrangement

- Tables to be arranged in a semi-circle fashion to promote equal participation from all members.

Introduction

Welcome everybody to today's group session. The focus of this session is being independent and efficient when you go shopping for items that are important for our day to day living.

Today we will be going to Walmart and performing a scavenger-based activity in which you will be locating items that may be necessary for everyday use. It is important that you can go to stores like this to get our daily activities. It can be challenging to navigate in these busy environments and locate all the items you need, or it may have been a task that our past partner performed. Shopping is a great time for all of us to make healthy decisions regarding food, buying self-care items, and the social interactions that happen.

During this group, the expectations are:

- Everybody will be respectful to one another, participate to their best abilities, and ask questions as needed for clarification.
- Are there any questions before we begin today's session?

Objectives

1. By the end of the session, each member will be able to individually complete the scavenger checklist.
2. By the end of the session, each member will identify how they may benefit from navigating stores independently.

Warm Up

Have each group member share at least one quote or strategy that they read in their book that has been useful for them during their journey through the program.

Activity

Materials needed:

- 8 clipboards (\$24)
- 8 pencils (\$4)
- Transportation (\$200)
- Estimated total: \$228

Activity Description

Leaders will prepare for activity by having all materials needed ready.

- Leaders will transport group members to a local Walmart or similar store where they will be given the grocery list (Appendix F). The grocery list contains all the items that will be needed for the next session. Explain to members that they do not need to buy the items; they need to locate the items.
- Once at the store they will then work their way through the list. The order that they find items does not matter and if they feel that they have become lost or start to have

difficulties they will be instructed to find the leaders at the front of the store by the customer service desk.

- Members may also ask for assistance from workers at the store. They will be given 30 minutes to complete the task.

Objectives Accomplished

This activity allows each member to be able to individually complete the scavenger checklist and making sure they have found everything on the list (objective 1). After participation in the activity each member will identify how they may benefit from navigating stores independently (objective 2).

Sharing

Once returned from the store, each member will share how many of the items they were able to find.

Processing

- What did you enjoy about the activity?
- What was difficult about this activity?
- If you ran into a challenge, how did you get through that?
- What was helpful in completing the activity?

Generalizing

Therapists will make connections between the answers that were given by group members. For example, the therapist can respond, “Most of you stated that (finding your way around the store, searching for objects, etc.) was the most enjoyable,” or “Some common (benefits or drawbacks) most of you identified were...”

Application

Go around and ask each member how they will use their shopping skills moving forward.

- How will you utilize shopping alone or with someone? What benefits do you expect to get from doing so?
- Make sure each person commits to when they will use shopping alone or with someone and how it can benefit them in their daily lives.

Summary

Have group leader summarize:

- What was completed for the warm up.
- How the activity went and some of the common themes of the activity.
- Shared feelings amongst group members during the activity.
- How members may apply the skills learned today and benefits of this through the next week.
- Thank the group for participating and sharing.
- End group on time.

Homework

Bring a copy of your favorite meal or recipe that you would like to share with the group for future meal ideas.

Session 6:

Cooking for One

Brief Outline

- Introduction (3 minutes)
- Warm-up (12 minutes)
- Activity (15-20 minutes)
- Discussion (10 minutes)
- Wrap-up/End Session (5 minutes)

Room Arrangement

- Tables to be arranged in a semi-circle fashion to promote equal participation from all members.

Introduction

Today we will be discussing and using our skills to cook a meal. Cooking for one can be a challenging task for many reasons. Some of these reasons could include unfamiliarity with the task as our partner was the one that previously had done it, it may have been something you did with our partner as a shared passion, or you may be finding it difficult to perform this task for one person. Any reason for this task becoming difficult is expected and acceptable. Because this is an important task for continuing in the absence of our partner, you will want to work on cooking for one to increase our overall health and independence.

During this group, the expectations are:

- The expectations for today's session are that everybody will be respectful to one another, participate to their best abilities, and ask questions as needed for clarification.
- Are there any questions before we begin today's session?

Objectives

1. By the end of the session, each member will be able to individually prepare a meal for themselves.
2. By the end of the session, each member will identify how they can utilize the internet or a cookbook for future recipe ideas.

Warm Up

Have each member discuss what they have done in the past week to improve their physical wellbeing from last week's session.

Activity

Materials needed:

- 1 heart of romaine lettuce per member (3-4 packs of 3 hearts \$12 - \$15)
- 1 gallon orange juice (\$3)
- 1 package baby carrots (\$2)
- 2 packages thin sliced ham (\$7)
- 1 container pumpkin seeds (\$4)
- 1 ground black pepper shaker (\$3)
- 1 cutting board or surface per member (may be borrowed from facility)
- 1 knife per member (may be borrowed from facility)
- 1 fork per member (may be borrowed from facility)
- 1 large spoon per member (may be borrowed from facility)
- 1 large bowl or plate per member (may be borrowed from facility)
- Estimated total: \$31 - \$34

Activity Description

In today's session you will be making a meal for one (adapted from BBC Good Food, 2021). Meals can be simple and easy, and with today's access via the internet, it is simple to find a variety of meals that are healthy and can range from simple to complex to make. For today, you will be making a simple salad. This can be made for a meal or for a snack during the day.

Directions:

- Encourage members to work together sharing materials and assisting others if needed
- Dice 1 heart of romaine lettuce to their preferred size (approximately ½ inch pieces) and place in bowl/plate
- Sliver 3-5 baby carrots to preferred size (approximately ⅛ - ¼ inch slices) and place in salad
- Dice 4 pieces of ham to preferred size (approximately ½ inch pieces) and place in salad
- Take 2 spoonsful of pumpkin seeds and sprinkle over salad
- Take 2 spoonsful of orange juice and drizzle over salad
- Sprinkle pepper to preference over salad
- Enjoy!

Objectives Accomplished

This activity allows each member to independently prepare a meal for themselves (objective 1). Through group discussion each member will be asked to identify how they may benefit from preparing a meal for themselves (objective 2).

Sharing

Each member will take time to eat their salad and enjoy the company of the group members around them while sharing their own recipes.

Processing

- What did you enjoy about the activity?
- What was difficult about this activity?
- What emotions or feelings were provoked while you were preparing or eating your salad?
- Did this activity bring anyone to reminisce about their partner? How does that make you feel?
- Is there any other type of meals you may wish to make but fear it may be challenging?
How can you work to make that type of meal (i.e., internet, cookbooks, etc.)?

Generalizing

Therapists will make connections between the answers that were given by group members. For example, the therapist can respond, “Most of you stated that (chopping the ingredients, working with your peers, etc.) was the most enjoyable,” or “Some common (benefits or drawbacks) most of you identified were...”

Application

Cooking for one as we said earlier can be a challenging task for many of us. It may be something new that provides a challenge to performing this occupation, or it may be an old task that brings back strong emotions regarding our lost loved one. Whether you fall on either of these spectrums or in the middle, it is important for us to cook healthy whole meals for continued growth and successful aging as you continue to move forward without our partner.

- How will you utilize cooking for one? And what are some benefits you expect to get from doing so (i.e., healthier eating, new enjoyable activity, etc.)?
- Make sure each person commits to when they will use cooking for one and how it can benefit them in their daily lives.

Summary

Have group leader summarize:

You can create meals to our individual preferences to explore a new activity or find a spiritual connection to our lost partner. Creating healthy whole meals will support our growth through these challenging times both physically and mentally.

- What was completed for the warm up.
- How the activity went and some of the common themes of the activity.
- Shared feelings amongst group members during the activity.
- How members may apply the skills learned today and benefits of this through the next week.
- Thank the group for participating and sharing.
- End group on time.

Homework

Your homework for next week is to make a list of things that need to be done around your home that your significant other may have taken care of before and bring it to the next session. Also, to continue to read the next two chapters in your chosen book(s).

Session 7:

Home Management

Brief Outline

- Introduction (3 minutes)
- Warm-up (5 minutes)
- Activity (20-30 minutes)
- Discussion (10 minutes)
- Wrap-up/End Session (5 minutes)

Room Arrangement

- Tables to be arranged in a semi-circle fashion to promote equal participation from all members.

Introduction

Welcome everybody to today's session regarding home maintenance. Today we will discover and learn about different services and skills to assist in the coping process and participating in a meaningful activity like maintaining your home. Group leaders will give a quick summary of the previous session.

During this group, the expectations are:

- Everybody will be respectful to one another, participate to their best abilities, and ask questions as needed for clarification.
- Are there any questions before we begin today's session?

Objectives

1. By the end of this session, group members will be able to search and find services to solve home maintenance problems.

2. By the end of this session, group members will be able to apply knowledge about different simple and complex home maintenance tasks and hazards and how to problem solve a solution.

Warm-Up

- Invite everyone to share the title of the book they are reading and a skill or interesting information that they learned from reading the assigned chapters. Ask each member to discuss how the learned information is pertinent to their stage of grieving or how it will benefit them in the future.
- Leaders will then instruct the group to find their list of home maintenance tasks that they were asked to prepare and bring from last session.
- Group members will be instructed to find another member with at least 2 common tasks on their list.
- Leaders will explain that the other member that you find will become your teammate for the next activity.

Activity

Materials Needed:

- Access to building wifi
- 4 6ft long tables (\$200)
- Access to 4 laptops
- Blank computer paper (\$4)
- 2 Phone Books (\$50)
- Pencils/Pens (\$8)
- Estimated total cost: \$262-\$300

Activity Description

Leaders will prepare for activity by having all materials needed ready.

- Each team of two is to start at a different table and state that the goal is to complete the home maintenance obstacle at the table before being able to move on to the next table.
- When a team is stuck solving an obstacle, they can ask the group leader for help or assistance.
- Assure the group that this is not a race, but for life skills practice. The goal of the activity is to complete each obstacle.

Table 1:

- 2 phonebooks
- 2 computers
- Teams at Table 1 will have a list of different services (plumber, auto repair, and paying bills). The objective of this table is to locate a phone number of the provider that services to your address.

Table 2:

- 2 phonebooks
- 2 computers
- Teams at Table 2 will create a list of (4) different activities in the community within the next month that they would be interested in attending. The objective of this table is to locate a meeting place and description of activity the participant would want to attend.

Table 3:

- 3 pictures of different rooms in a home that contain hazards (i.e., crumpled rugs, loose/hanging cords, leaking faucet, etc.)

- Teams at Table 3 will have to identify the hazards in each picture before moving to the next table

Table 4:

- Teams at Table 4 will be given slips of paper that they have to put into 4 categories (fall, winter, spring, summer). On the slips of paper there will be tasks that need to be done around the house. The team is to correctly identify which tasks go with each season.

Within your group, identify who can and cannot perform these tasks. Then the group will problem solve how they can or receive assistance for performing those tasks.

The leader will then instruct the group to raise their hands when they are finished so they can have their answers checked and move to the next table.

Objectives Accomplished

This activity will allow group members to search and find services to solve home maintenance problems (objective 1). Objective 1 is achieved when the group identifies different services found in their area. During the activities, the group members will be able to apply knowledge about different simple and complex home maintenance tasks and hazards and how to problem solve a solution (objective 2) and integrate them into their daily routine. Objective 2 is achieved when members can identify and implement home maintenance tasks and understand how they may perform or require assistance to achieve these home maintenance tasks.

Sharing

Each member will take turns and share what services they looked for during the obstacle course. Next, ask the group which home maintenance activity they found the most difficult to complete.

Processing

- How do you feel after engaging in these activities?
- How did you feel when your feelings were similar/different to others during the activity?
- If you found yourself overwhelmed by activities that you may not be able to do, how can you receive assistance to have them done?
- How did you solve problems with home maintenance tasks that you have not done before?

Generalizing

Therapists will make connections between the answers that were given by group members. For example, the therapist can respond, “Most of you stated that (exploring home maintenance, finding meaning in activity, etc.) was the most enjoyable,” or “Some common feelings most of you identified were...”

Application

Being independent at home allows us to find meaning, purpose, and connections within ourselves and the world around us. Independence is also a tool to utilize as you heal from the grief that you have experienced in losing a partner. Home maintenance is not just something we experience alone; you can experience it through others in forms of asking for assistance or spending time with others. Or you can experience this in learning within ourselves and providing for others and the environment.

Ask each member how they will use home maintenance in their daily lives.

- How will you utilize independence in home maintenance in your everyday life? What benefits do you expect to get from doing so?
- Make sure each person commits to when they will use it and how it can benefit them in their daily lives.

Summary

Have a group leader summarize:

- What was completed for the warm up
- Completed an activity to address home maintenance or strategies that can be implemented to help problem solve different situations
- Shared different feelings that were experienced during the activities
- Discussed how each member will apply the information learned within the next week
- Thank the group for participating and sharing
- End the group on time

Homework

Read the next two chapters of the selected book. Write down two of your favorite quotes or strategies that you want to remember to apply to your journey. Bring them to the next session.

Session 8:

Money Management: Budgeting

Brief Outline:

- Introduction (3 minutes)
- Warm-up (12 minutes)
- Activity (25 minutes)
- Discussion (10 minutes)
- Wrap-up/End Session (5 minutes)

Room Arrangement

- Tables to be arranged in a semi-circle fashion to promote equal participation from all members.

Introduction

Welcome everybody to today's session regarding money management and different techniques that you can utilize to support our finances.

Money management is an important task that you all must be able to do to ensure you continue with taking care of ourselves and our belongings. This may have been something you did with our lost partner or something our partner may have done entirely. Nonetheless, it is important that you continue to do this and be as efficient as possible with this to track your finances.

During this group, the expectations are:

- Everybody will be respectful to one another, participate to their best abilities, and ask questions as needed for clarification.
- Are there any questions before we begin today's session?

Objectives

1. By the end of the session, each member will be able to complete a form to track their budget.

2. By the end of the session, each member will identify how they may benefit from using a form to track their expenses.

Warm Up

- Have each group member share at least one example from the readings that they have utilized to cope with the loss of their partner.

Activity

Materials needed:

- 8 pencils (\$4)
- 8 printouts of Excel budget spreadsheet (\$2)
- Google Chromecast (\$30)
- Mint: Personal Finance & Money app (Free)
- Estimated total: \$36

Activity Description

Leaders will prepare for activity by having all materials needed ready.

- Leaders will prepare for activity by printing out 8 print outs of the Excel budget spreadsheet. They will also need to download a budgeting app on their smart phone and screen share to the TV within the facility (Appendix G).
- Demonstrate to all members how they can access the personal monthly budget Excel spreadsheet (Appendix G) via Google Chromecast screen share.
- Give each participant a blank Excel spreadsheet printed out. They will take approximately 15 minutes to fill it out with regards to their last month's expenses.

- Once completed the leaders will share their screen from their phone using the Google Chromecast and screen share feature. They will then walk the members through how to use the app and take approximately 15 minutes explaining the app.

Objectives Accomplished

This activity allows each member the ability to complete a form to track their budget (objective 1). Through participation and active engagement in the activity each member will be able to identify how they might benefit from using a form to track their expenses (objective 2).

Sharing

Each member will share if they already use a budgeting form of some sort and if they do not how they handled their day-to-day expenses.

Processing

- What did you enjoy about the activity?
- What was difficult about this activity?
- Did any of the areas of your budget surprise you, if so which ones and why?
- How was helpful in completing the activity?

Generalizing

Therapists will make connections between the answers that were given by group members. For example, the therapist can respond, “Most of you stated that (using your smartphone to budget, using the pen and paper form, etc.) was the most enjoyable,” or “Some common (benefits or drawbacks) most of you identified were...”

Application

Go around and ask each member how they will use budgeting forms for future use in personal money management.

- How will you utilize a form of budget tracking? What benefits do you expect to get from doing so?
- Make sure each person commits to when they will use shopping alone or with someone and how it can benefit them in their daily lives.

Summary

Have group leader summarize:

- What was completed for the warm up.
- How the activity went and some of the common themes of the activity.
- Shared feelings amongst group members during the activity.
- How members may apply the skills learned today and benefits of this through the next week.
- Thank the group for participating and sharing.
- End group on time.

Homework

Continue to read the next 2 chapters of your chosen book(s). Be prepared to discuss something interesting you learned about in your readings at the next session.

Session 9:

Leisure Exploration

Brief Outline

- Introduction (3 minutes)
- Warm-up (10 minutes)
- Activity (30 minutes)
- Discussion (12 minutes)
- Wrap-up/End Session (5 minutes)

Room Arrangement

- Two round/square tables with 4 chairs at each table

Introduction

Welcome everybody to today's session regarding leisure exploration and social participation. Group leaders will give a quick summary of the previous session.

During this group the expectations are:

- That everybody will be respectful to one another, participate to their best abilities, and ask questions as needed for clarification.
- Are there any questions before we begin today's session?

Objectives

1. By the end of the session, each member will be able to identify a leisure activity that they wish to participate in.
2. By the end of the session, each member will identify how they may benefit from participating in leisure or social activities.

Warm Up

Have each group member share at least one example from the readings that they have utilized to cope with the loss of their partner in the past week.

Activity

Materials needed:

- 8 pencils (\$4)
- 8 printouts Modified Interest Checklist (Appendix H) (\$2)
- 8 printouts of pinochle rules (Appendix I) (\$2)
- 2 pinochle decks (\$10)
- Estimated total: \$18

Activity Description

Leaders will prepare for activities by reading and understanding rules of pinochle and having Modified Interest Checklist (Kielhofner & Neville, 1986) printouts ready.

- To begin, hand out the Modified Interest Checklist to each member and ask them to fill it out to the best of their ability, we will be discussing this after the activity.
- Once everyone has finished the Modified Interest Checklist, assign the members into groups of 4.
- Handout pinochle rules and decks to each group, assist each group in getting started with the basics of pinochle.
- Allow the groups to play for approximately 25 min and end groups.

Objectives Accomplished

This activity will allow group members to use a comprehensive list of leisure activities that may be insightful in gathering information about leisure interests that they wish to participate in (objective 1). Through playing in a common card game and possibly after discussing, the members will begin to identify how participating in leisure or social activities is beneficial to themselves (objective 2).

Sharing

Each member will share what they found enjoyable about this activity and if they do something similar for a leisure activity of some sort.

Processing

- Looking at your Modified Interest Checklist, what are two activities that you wish you could participate in?
- What are the barriers to allowing yourself to participate in that activity?
- Looking at your Modified Interest Checklist again, what are two activities that you can continue to participate in?
- What enables you to continue to do these tasks?
- How can you continue in the absence of our partner with different leisure activities?
- How can you explore new ones?

Generalizing

Therapists will make connections between the answers that were given by group members. For example, the therapist can respond, “Most of you stated that (conversating, challenging my thinking skills, etc.) was the most enjoyable,” or “Some common (barriers or enablers) most of you identified were...”

Application

Go around and ask each member how they will use leisure in the next week.

- How will you use a new or old leisure activity? What benefits do you expect to get from doing so?
- Make sure each person commits to how they will participate in a new or old leisure activity and how it can benefit them in their daily lives.

Summary

Have group leader summarize:

- What was completed for the warm up.
- How the activity went and some of the common themes of the activity.
- Shared feelings amongst group members during the activity.
- How members may apply the skills learned today and benefits of this through the next week.
- Thank the group for participating and sharing.
- End group on time.

Homework

Participate in a new or old leisure or social activity. Read the next two chapters of the chosen book(s) and come prepared to discuss something you have learned or stood out to you from that reading. Ask participants to bring a snack to share with the group for the final session.

Session 10:

Wrap Up and Referrals

Brief Outline:

- o Introduction (3 minutes)
- o Warm-up (5 minutes)
- o Activity (15 minutes)
- o Discussion (10 minutes)
- o Wrap-up/End Session (5 minutes)

Room Arrangement

- Tables to be arranged in a semi-circle fashion to promote equal participation from all members.

Introduction

Welcome everybody to the last session of this group. today's session regarding a wrap up and your continued journey in healing. Today you will be using all the tools and strategies that you have learned throughout the group to assist in the coping process and participating in a meaningful activity. Group leaders will give a quick summary of the previous session.

During this group, the expectations are:

- Everybody will be respectful to one another, participate to their best abilities, and ask questions as needed for clarification.
- Are there any questions before we begin today's session?

Objectives

1. By the end of this session, group members will be able to reflect on their time spent during the group sessions.
2. By the end of this session, group members will be able to apply knowledge about different coping skills and be able to implement one during times of distress.

Warm-Up

- Have all the participants complete a satisfaction survey (Appendix K).
- Explain to the group to complete the survey as accurately and truthfully as they can.

Their answers help improve the quality of the group for future participants.

Activity

Materials Needed:

- Blank computer paper (\$4)
- 8 printouts of satisfaction survey (Appendix K) (\$4)
- Previously completed COPM (Appendix A)
- Pencils/Pens (\$8)
- White standard envelopes (\$9)
- Lemonade mix (\$19)
- Plastic Cups (\$7)
- Plastic Plates (\$9)
- Assorted Doughnuts (\$20)
- Estimated total cost: \$75-\$80

Activity Description

Leaders will prepare for activity by having all materials needed ready.

- Ask the group to close their eyes and reflect on the time they have spent coming to the group.
- The group leader will then explain that the activity of this session is to write a letter of encouragement to your future self.

- Have each group member write a letter of words of encouragement, things to remember, self-love, or anything advice they would benefit from reading again.
- Once they have completed their letter have them address it to themselves and then seal the envelope. On the back of the sealed envelope have them write a date that is special to them or when they think they would like to read their letter, it could be a month from now, on a birthday, on the passing day of their loved one, or on an anniversary.
- Remind the group members to put this envelope in a place where they will not forget about it and to set a reminder when to open it.
- The group leader will then discuss local groups and activities that are in the area that would continue to help benefit the group members and encourage them to keep attending groups or participating in leisure activities that bring them joy.
- Lastly, leaders should hand out each member's COPM (Appendix B) handout from session 1. The therapist should go through the COPM with the group as a whole and encourage members to ask questions if needed for clarification.

Objectives Accomplished:

This activity will allow group members to reflect on their time spent during group sessions (objective 1). Objective 1 is achieved when the group identifies different skills they have learned during their time. During the activities, the group members may try or implement different coping skills (objective 2). Objective 2 is achieved when members can identify and implement coping skills that will work best in their lifestyle.

Sharing

Encourage each member to share their favorite part of participating in the program or what is the most important thing they have learned from coming to the group.

Processing

- How do you feel after engaging in these activities and this group?
- What is one skill or technique that you have learned that you will take with you and remember from this group?

Application

Growing and becoming more independent in occupations allows us to find meaning, purpose, and connections within ourselves and the world around us. During the group session you learned about tools and techniques to utilize as you heal from the grief that you have experienced in losing a partner. Independence and coping are not just something you experience alone; you can experience it through others in forms of volunteerism and social gatherings. Or you can experience this in learning within ourselves and providing for others and the environment.

Ask each member how they will use their independence and coping techniques in their daily lives.

- How will you utilize spirituality in your everyday life? What benefits do you expect to get from doing so?
- Make sure each person commits to when they will use it and how it can benefit them in their daily lives.

Summary:

Have a group leader summarize:

- What was completed for the warm up.
- Completed an activity about writing an encouraging message to your future self.
- Shared different feelings that were experienced during the duration of the group sessions.

- Discussed how each member will continue to apply the information learned throughout their life.
- Thank the group for participating and sharing and wish them well in their life journey and remember all the skills they have learned through the group.
- End the group on time
- Allow for continued discussion and enjoy treats/snacks together

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APPENDICES (A-K)

APPENDIX A
PROMOTIONAL FLYER

GROW

With Occupational Therapy

August-September
2020

Every Tuesday 6pm – 7pm
7 Sessions

Widowed Educational Program

Cost: Free

Location: Wyoming Medical
Center

1233 E. Second St.
Casper, WY 82601



This program provides the survivor of a loved one an opportunity to grow in their individual identity. The program identifies roles and tasks that individuals may find challenging during this period and works to increase your independence.

powered by

 PIKTOCHART

APPENDIX B

BOOK LIST

Recommended Readings

Tuesdays with Morrie, by Mitch Albom

The Year of Magical Thinking, by Joan Didion

Remembering with Love, by Elizabeth Levang

Lovely Bones, by Alice Sebold

When Bad Things Happen to Good People, by Harold Kushner

The Tao of Pooh, by Benjamin Hoff

For One More Day, Mitch Albom

The Memory Keeper's Daughter, Kim Edwards.

APPENDIX C

FINISH THE SENTENCES

Finish the Sentences...

The thing that makes me feel the saddest is

If I could talk to the person who died I would ask (say)....

Since the death my family doesn't....

My worst memory is....

If I could change things I would....

One thing that I liked to do with the person who died was...

When the person died I....

Since the death my friends....

After the death, school....

When I am alone....

The thing that makes me feel the happiest is...

The thing that makes me feel the safest is...

The one person who understand me the most is...

The thing that makes me feel the angriest is...

I feel better when...



APPENDIX D
WHAT IS SPIRITUALITY?

What is spirituality?

Recognising the difference between spirituality and religion can be a great way to begin to understand what spirituality means to different people. There are many types of spirituality that people sometimes base their beliefs around and also many different reasons people practice spirituality.

Spirituality is something that's often debated and commonly misunderstood. Many people confuse spirituality with religion and so bring pre-existing beliefs about the impact of religion to discussions about spirituality. Though all religions emphasise spirituality as being an important part of faith, it's possible to be 'spiritual' without necessarily being a part of an organised religious community.

What's the difference between religion and spirituality?

Spirituality and religion can be hard to tell apart but there are some pretty defined differences between the two.

Religion is a specific set of organised beliefs and practices, usually shared by a community or group.

Spirituality is more of an individual practice and has to do with having a sense of peace and purpose. It also relates to the process of developing beliefs around the meaning of life and connection with others.

One way that might help you to understand the relationship between spirituality and religion is imagine a game of football. The rules, referees, other players, and field markings help guide you as you play the game in a similar way that religion might guide you to find your spirituality.

Kicking the ball around a park, without having to play on the field or with all the rules and regulations, can also give you fulfilment and fun and still expresses the essence of the game, similar to spirituality in life.

People may identify as being any combination of religious and spiritual, but to be religious does not automatically make you spiritual or vice-versa.

Different types of spirituality?

Mystical spirituality is based around a desire to move beyond the material world, beyond the senses, ego and even beyond time. This approach centres on personal relationships and a sense of unity with all things.

This might help if...

- › You're looking for information on spirituality
- › You want to know the difference between spirituality and religion
- › You'd like to become a more spiritual person

Take action...

- › Learn more about different ways to express spirituality
- › Try going to a meditation class to gain some perspective
- › Look into the history and practice of different types of spirituality



Authoritarian spirituality is a particularly strong form of spirituality based around a need for definition and rules. This type of spirituality is particularly common in specific religious practices.

Intellectual spirituality focuses on building knowledge and understanding of spirituality through analysing history and spiritual theories. This approach can be found in the study of religion, also known as theology.

Service spirituality is a common form of spirituality in many religious faiths. This is predominantly built around serving others as a form of spiritual expression.

Social spirituality is often practiced by people who experience a spiritual feeling in the company of others. Social support is often seen as one of the important aspects of spirituality in general.

Why do people practice spirituality?

Many people see spirituality as a great way of seeking solace and peace in their life. It can often be practiced alongside things like yoga, which ultimately focus on stress relief and release of emotion.

Spirituality is also used as a way of gaining perspective, recognising that our role in life has a greater value than just what we do every day. It can separate a person from dependence on material things and establish a greater purpose. Some people also see spirituality as a way of coping with change or uncertainty.



From everyday troubles through to really tough times, take the first step with ReachOut.com, Australia's leading online youth mental health service.

www.reachout.com

APPENDIX E
EXERCISE LINKS

Modified Yoga Links:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tyeMFy9KkTY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kTawI5zHaoI>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wmG-MNjI4Lk>

Beginners Yoga Links:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m756Gz8de4M>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v7AYKMP6rOE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yetbSrCW1TQ>

Modified at Home Workouts:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J4LJxvj3BY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=86QRDjbrbdk>

<https://www.wellandgood.com/best-workouts-limited-mobility/>

Beginners At Home Workouts:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UItWltVZZmE>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GS_z6FG_jqE

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H0c-4nZjIWQ>

APPENDIX F
GROCERY LIST

Grocery List Checklist

- 1 heart of romaine lettuce
- 1 gallon orange juice
- 1 package baby carrots
- 2 packages thin sliced ham
- 1 container pumpkin seeds
- 1 ground black pepper shaker
- 1 cutting board
- 1 knife
- 1 fork
- 1 large spoon
- 1 large bowl or plate

APPENDIX G
BUDGET DIRECTIONS

Excel Budget Spreadsheet

- Open Excel spreadsheet on computer
- Click New on the left-hand side
- In online templates search bar search “budget”
- Click on first template given named “Personal Monthly Budget”
- Click Personal Monthly Budget sheet on bottom of screen
- Clear out prefilled cells

Mint: Personal Finance & Money

- Open smartphone and locate App Store or Google Play Store
- Tap search icon on screen
- Search “mint budgeting”
- Tap download
- Exit out of App Store or Google Play Store
- Locate app and click to open

Google Chromecast Screen Share

- Connect Google Chromecast to local internet through settings, wifi, click on local wifi, type in password if applicable
- Locate screen share app
- Connect laptop, tablet, or smartphone to local wifi
- Use screen share app and connect to Google Chromecast

APPENDIX H

MODIFIED INTEREST CHECKLIST

INTEREST CHECKLIST

Activity	What has been your level of interest						Do you currently participate in this activity?		Would you like to pursue this in the future?	
	In the past ten years			In the past year						
	Strong	Some	No	Strong	Some	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Gardening Yardwork										
Sewing/needle work										
Playing card										
Foreign languages										
Church activities										
Radio										
Walking										
Car repair										
Writing										
Dancing										
Golf										
Football										
Listening to popular music										
Puzzles										
Holiday Activities										
Pets/livestock										
Movies										
Listening to classical music										
Speeches/lectures										
Swimming										
Bowling										
Visiting										
Mending										
Checkers/Chess										
Barbecues										
Reading										
Traveling										
Parties										
Wrestling										
Housecleaning										
Model building										
Television										
Concerts										
Pottery										

APPENDIX I
PINOCHLE RULES

PINOCHLE RULES

	Name	Points	Frequency
1 each of A-10-K-Q-J in trump	run	150 pts	1 hand in 2
Extra King or Queen in trump (only for players with single run)	extra King/Queen	20 pts	1 hand in 3
2 each of A-10-K-Q-J in trump suit	double run	1500 pts	1 hand in 100
1 Ace in all four suits, ♠♦♣♥	100 aces	100 pts	1 hand in 4
2 Aces in all four suits, ♠♦♣♥	1000 aces	1000 pts	1 hand in 100
1 King in all four suits, ♠♦♣♥	80 kings	80 pts	1 hand in 20
2 Kings in all four suits, ♠♦♣♥	800 kings	800 pts	1 hand in 300
1 Queen in all four suits, ♠♦♣♥	60 queens	60 pts	1 hand in 20
2 Queens in all four suits, ♠♦♣♥	600 queens	600 pts	1 hand in 500
1 Jack in all four suits, ♠♦♣♥	40 jacks	40 pts	1 hand in 20
2 Jacks in all four suits, ♠♦♣♥	400 jacks	400 pts	1 hand in 1000
Queen of ♠ and Jack of ♦	pinochle	40 pts	1 hand in 4
2 Queens of ♠ and 2 Jacks of ♦	double pinochle	300 pts	1 hand in 20
3 Queens of ♠ and 3 Jacks of ♦	triple pinochle*	600 pts	1 hand in 100
King and Queen in non-trump suit	marriage	20 pts	3 to 5 each hand
King and Queen in trump suit	marriage	40 pts	About 1 each hand
Marriage in all four suits**	roundhouse	240 pts	1 hand in 30
9 in trump suit	9 of trump	10 pts	2 each hand

*only in double-deck pinochle

**kings and queens around is not counted additional

Dealing: Deal passes around table for each hand, to the left. After shuffling, the dealer allows the player to his right to cut the deck. The dealer typically deals three cards to each player at a time.

Optional rule: If a player is dealt five 9s and has no meld, he can throw in the hand before bidding begins.

Bidding: Players bid to see how many total points their team can make from the melding and playing of their cards. In a four-handed game, first player to dealer's left is "in" for 250 points, and bidding proceeds to the left, usually in 10 point increments. Once a player has passed, he is out of the bidding.

Bidder bunch!!

In a four-handed game, the average high bid is between 350 and 450 points. A typical bid for a hand with all but one card for a run and all but one card for 100 Aces is 380 points. A typical bid for a hand with three legs of

pinochle (all but one card for a double pinochle) is 350 points (or more, depending on your other cards).

In a three-handed game (single deck with a three card kitty), the opening bid is 150, and a typical high bid is between 200 and 250.

In a five-handed game (double deck with no nines), the opening bid is 450, and the typical high bid is between 550 and 650.

If a player's partner has passed, he may want to continue bidding even if he doesn't intend to take the bid, just to prevent the opponents' getting the bid for a low amount.

The high bidder names the trump suit for the hand and is passed four cards by his partner.

Passing cards: If your partner receives the bid, he will name the trump suit and you will pass four cards to him. Typically, you pass trump cards, Aces and, if your partner named ♠ or ♦ trump, pinochle cards. If your partner names ♣ or ♥ trump, *never* pass him

pinochle cards — he'll pass you back for pinochle. The reason is that the high bidder may want to empty his hand of non-trump suits so that when other cards are led, he can immediately trump those tricks.

Melding: After receiving the four cards from his partner, the high bidder shows his meld (see above for scoring) and, keeping the melded cards face up in front of him on the table, passes four cards remaining in his hand back to his partner. The partner and opponents can then show their meld.

Optional rule: If the high bidder believes he can get every point of every trick, he announces he is "playing 1000." He shows no meld and passes four cards back to his partner, who also shows no meld. The opposing team may show meld, although their points count only if the bidding team does not get every point of every trick. Play continues as usual except that the high bidder's partner does not play; he merely pulls in the tricks and adds them to the pile of his own cards. If the team playing 1000 wins all the counting cards, they score 1000 points and their opponents lose their meld. If the team does not win every counting card, it loses 1000 points and the opponents' meld counts, as well as the points from the tricks they won.

The Play: All cards are picked up and the play begins. The high bidder leads (usually with an Ace). Play continues to the left until everyone has played a card. Players must follow suit unless they are out of that suit, in which case they must trump. If a player cannot follow suit and has no trump, any card may be played.

A player must also "beat" the previous high card if he can. For instance, if the first player leads a 10 of ♣, the second player must beat it with an A of ♣ if he has it. If he cannot beat the 10, he must at least follow suit. If he has no ♣s, he must trump (unless ♣s is trump). If the second player trumps with a Queen of trump, the third player would still need to

follow suit and play a ♠ if he has one, although he would not need to beat the 10 (since the 10 had already been beaten with a trump card). If the third player has no ♠s and must trump, he must beat the trump card the second player played. If the fourth player cannot follow suit either, he must beat the highest trump card if he can.

If there were no trump cards played on the trick, high card in the suit that was led wins the trick. If trump cards were played on the trick, the highest trump card wins the trick. The order of cards is Ace-10-King-Queen-Jack-9. If two of the same high card were played, the first player that played the card takes the trick.

After the play, both teams count the cards from the tricks they've pulled in for counters: Aces, 10s and Kings. Each counter card is worth one point. Queens, Jacks and 9s count nothing. If a team does not pull in any tricks with counter cards, it loses any meld it had that hand. If a team that took no counters melded 9s in trump, the points from the 9s can be counted.

APPENDIX J

PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION SURVEY

Satisfaction Survey

Answer the following questions and rate your perception of your ability of how well you perform these tasks or roles currently. Circle the coordinating score.

	Poor	Marginal	Acceptable	Good	Excellent
Care of Others	1	2	3	4	5
Financial Management	1	2	3	4	5
Home Management	1	2	3	4	5
Meal Preparation	1	2	3	4	5
Meal Cleanup	1	2	3	4	5
Shopping	1	2	3	4	5
Social Participation	1	2	3	4	5
Spiritual Practice	1	2	3	4	5

How satisfied do you feel with the overall program?

<input type="checkbox"/> Very Dissatisfied	<input type="checkbox"/> Dissatisfied	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Satisfied
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Do you feel that you have gained knowledge during the program?

YES NO

Do you feel that the leaders of the program were knowledgeable about the topic?

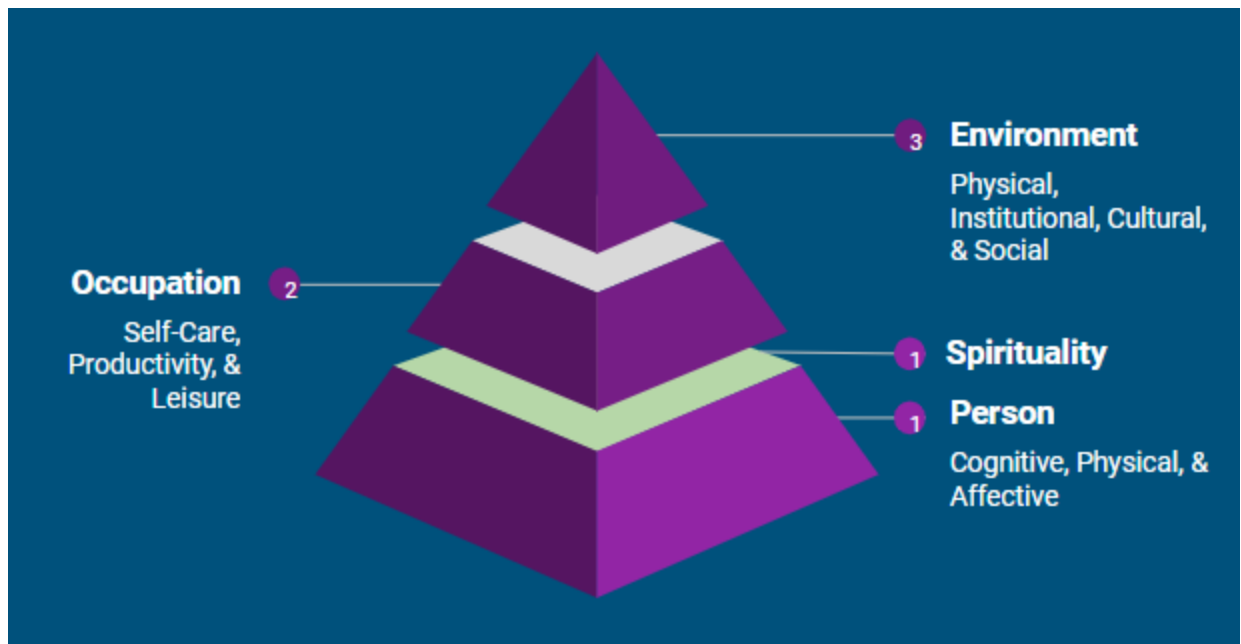
YES NO

Would you recommend this program to others?

YES NO

List any recommendations or suggestions for future groups.

APPENDIX K
CMOP-E GUIDE TO PROGRAMMING



Utilizing the CMOP-E (Polatajko, Townsend, & Craik, 2007) to guide our programming we wanted to create a strong foundation for the participants to build upon. For this we developed the first four sessions based on the person context. The first session starts by building an understanding of the purpose of the group and grief. We then move to coaching how to use coping and relaxation exercises. These two sessions are important as they are preparatory in nature to begin to understand grief and how we can begin to cope and heal after the loss of a loved one. The program then moves to more specific person contexts of the CMOP-E working on spirituality and cognitive and physical exercises. Spirituality is at the core of the person and fills this foundation.

After we have this foundation, we can begin to work on occupations, all the occupations are ADLs and IADLs that were identified in the literature as potential problems faced by the survivor. We begin session 5 with shopping, in which the participants will search at a grocery store for the items needed to create a meal. The next session builds upon this with a class in which the participants create a simple meal for one. In session 7 the participants will identify household tasks, hazards, and proper ways for caring for any problems they may face with common home management expectations. The next session focuses on budgeting finances utilizing an app on a smartphone or a template from excel that can be printed and used by hand or on the computer. In the last session targeting occupations, the participants will explore leisure interests utilizing the Modified Interest Checklist by Kielhofner and Neville, 1983.

To cap it off, the final session addresses the environments of the participants. They can see and discuss changes within their physical, cultural, and social environments over the course of this program. This is an opportunity of closure for the participants as they have reached the end of this journey and to discuss referral options to continue to use going forward.

CHAPTER V:

SUMMARY

The loss of a partner has profound effects on the surviving partner, many of the effects include physical and cognitive decline. These changes lead to increased institutionalization of assisted living homes and death of the survivor, especially among men (Eckhold, Watson, & O'Connor, 2017). The survivor also experiences an intense period of grief, known as bereavement. During bereavement, the survivor experiences a change in roles and occupations. These changes consisted of difficulty with assuming the roles that the partner had previously completed and re-engaging in occupations that the couple had previously performed (Eckhold, Watson, & O'Connor, 2017; Ward, Mathias, & Hitchings, 2007). The population that is focused on for the purposes of this scholarly project are older adults aged 65 years and older. This is the population that was identified as having the most difficult time re-engaging in occupations and picking up the roles that the partner had done. A program aimed at assisting with the grief in the bereavement process and education on engaging in meaningful and important ADLs and IADLs is of great importance for continued independent living. Therefore, there is a strong need for occupational therapists to address the role identity and occupational deprivation for these individuals while increasing occupational performance and engagement in desired occupations.

An extensive literature review was systematically conducted to identify the impacts of losing a partner amongst older adults and the role of occupational therapy for working with this population. The findings by the authors revealed that occupational therapy has a vital role in engaging in ADLs and IADLs while working on the psychosocial support of losing a loved one (Batista et al., 2019). The authors found that there was a gap in the literature addressing

occupational performance following the loss of a partner and the role of occupational therapy for continued occupational performance and engagement.

The authors created *Recovering from the Loss of a Loved One: A Group Protocol for Remaining Active in Valued Occupations while Coping with the Loss of a Loved One* to address this area of need. This group protocol is intended to be used with older adults, 65 years of age and older that have lost their partner within the past year. The product is guided by the Canadian Model of Occupation Performance and Engagement (CMOP-E) (Townsend & Polatajko, 2007). The CMOP-E will be used with its central focus on spirituality while looking at occupational performance between the person, occupation, and environment. These factors all contribute to the individual's ability to cope and engage in meaningful and important occupations. The role of the occupational therapist is to help group members understand the bereavement process and engage in occupations. The protocol provides recommended procedures to follow in facilitation of the group protocol.

There are several clear benefits from the group protocol; however, there are also limitations present. Since this is an original product, this protocol has not yet been implemented, therefore it is difficult to determine the overall effectiveness it will have for the group members. Another limitation is that the group is closed upon the starting date. This will have an impact on anyone not currently in the group that loses a partner during the duration of the group protocol and will not be able to participate until a future session. Lastly, the protocol focuses on bereavement, the person, occupations, and the environment. All of these are important following the loss of a partner as they contribute to the engagement and occupational performance of the individual.

For therapists that will implement this group protocol in the future, it is recommended that they familiarize themselves with the protocol before starting the group. The protocol is intended to be used by occupational therapists, but occupational therapy students or others may be trained by an occupational therapist to run the group protocol. This will create many more opportunities for individuals who have lost their partner to benefit from this product. The leaders of the group will also need to understand that grief is not a linear process, and all people grief differently. Therefore, the leaders will need to be aware of the participant's needs and modify any part of the program to fit the participant's needs dealing with coping and grief. Finally, the protocol will likely need to be further developed and improved after first being implemented and identifying its strengths and weaknesses. Based on the existing literature found by the authors, this group protocol may assist in filling the gaps in the literature regarding occupational therapy's role of increasing engagement and occupational performance while assisting with the coping of bereavement.

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